



NEWS RELEASE

Today's Date: Tuesday, December 7, 2010

District: 05 – Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties

Contact: Jim Shivers or Colin Jones

Phone: (805) 549-3237 or (805) 549-3189

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALTRANS DISTRICT 5 EMPLOYEE RECEIVES MEDAL FOR HEROIC ACT

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY – Caltrans District 5 Surveyor Robert “Bob” MacKenzie has received the Governor’s Gold Medal of Valor for his heroic actions on Hwy. 88 near Kirkwood, CA on the morning of Nov. 30, 2009. The medal was presented by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger at a statewide ceremony in Sacramento on Dec. 7.

MacKenzie and his wife, who live in Los Osos observed a man waving his arms stating that a car had just crashed over the embankment. MacKenzie went over the guardrail and proceeded 75 to 100 feet down a slippery, snow covered, rocky mountainside.

He found an elderly man standing next to an overturned station wagon with his wife trapped in the front seat of the car with one of her arms pinned under the right front windshield. He was wearing shorts and tennis shoes and standing in about a foot of snow. MacKenzie found a rubber mat which was thrown from the car and placed it on the snow allowing the man to stand on it in order to prevent hypothermia and/or frostbite.

MacKenzie returned to the woman and covered her hand with a snow boot he found in the car while trying to keep her comfortable and treating her for shock. He covered the woman with his jacket and stayed with her for the next 20 minutes in freezing temperatures until rescuers reached the scene.

(more)





NEWS RELEASE

MacKenzie described to rescuers how the woman was trapped which allowed them to make a single trip down the steep embankment with the proper tools and first aid supplies. MacKenzie remained at the scene alongside emergency personnel during the entire extraction which took approximately 3 hours.

The woman was removed from the vehicle and taken by air to a hospital in Reno, NV. Because of weight restrictions, her husband could not accompany his wife to the hospital.

MacKenzie offered to drive her husband to the hospital, a two hour trip which was made in the opposite direction that Mackenzie and his wife were traveling.

The actions by MacKenzie during this incident were over and above the call of duty and were directly responsible for preventing further injury or death.

“The State of California is proud of the actions of Caltrans District 5 employee Robert “Bob” MacKenzie for his extraordinary act of service above and beyond the normal call of duty or service. He is a deserving recipient of the Governor’s Gold Medal of Valor,” said Caltrans District 5 Director Rich Krumholz.

###

